The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

2022
ANNUAL REPORT

www.neargov.org
The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) was founded to pursue the mutual development of Northeast Asia and contribute to world peace by establishing networks for exchange and cooperation between regional governments based on the spirit of mutual benefit and equality to build trust-based relationships. It is one of the largest international organizations in Asia with 79 participating local and metropolitan governments from six countries: China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, North Korea, and Russia, embracing 70 million people.
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Message
Greetings from the NEAR Chairperson

Honorable Members of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments!

I like to sincerely thank you for your efforts in supporting the development of NEAR and its members in 2022.

Over the past few years, we have experienced many difficulties due to the global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, through cooperation and solidarity around the world, we are gradually overcoming the challenges.

In particular, we successfully held the 13th NEAR Working Committee in Ulsan Metropolitan City last September, leading the NEAR members to mutual exchange and cooperation, giving new hope to regional development in Northeast Asia.

However, the world is facing other difficulties, such as the recent deterioration of relations between major countries and the uncertainties in the global economy.

Amid such situations, I believe that if Northeast Asia continues to strengthen cooperation and solidarity with local governments based on its potential to grow, it will be able to overcome crises and difficulties wisely, simultaneously creating a new foundation for growth.

In 2023, Ulsan Metropolitan City plans to hold the 14th General Assembly as the chair of NEAR. If all our member countries come together in Ulsan Metropolitan City and gather wisdom for common prosperity and development in Northeast Asia, we will be able to wisely find solutions to the current issues and contribute to world peace, as well as peace on the Korean peninsula.

Together with the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR), which is in its twenty-sixth year, Ulsan Metropolitan City will continue to act as a member of NEAR, trusting relationships among member regional governments, and actively participate in further strengthening regional cooperation.

I would like to use this opportunity to congratulate you for publishing the 2022 Annual Report, and I wish all the members of NEAR success and prosperity.

KIM Doo-gyum
Chairperson of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments
Mayor of Ulsan Metropolitan City

Celebrating the year 2023, we wish the members of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) good health and happiness. We like to extend our gratitude for your understanding and support for NEAR over the past year.

Last year, our association successfully held the 13th Working Committee of 2022 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, where face-to-face exchange between member regional governments was suspended. While this working committee meeting was held online where it used to be held both online and offline, it was attended by representatives from 54 local governments, the largest number ever to attend, from five countries: China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia. All three agenda items were passed: introduction of absentee voting, expansion of associate membership, and amendment of provision on operational expenses of the general assembly and the working committee.

In particular, as we have made significant progress in achieving the objectives of NEAR, such as promoting mutual understanding and deepening multilateral relations. Through long-standing human exchange over the past 26 years, in the future, we will recruit more associate members from regions other than Asia on the amended NEAR charter. This will make the importance of our association as a platform for multilateral exchange more widely known throughout the world.

In addition, Hyogo Prefecture and Shimane Prefecture of Japan, and Shandong Province of China distributed information and held subcommittee meetings this year both online and offline. Even though it was the first time for both Henan Province and Shaanxi Province, they successfully held the subcommittee meetings both online and offline. As such, this year marked the special efforts made by member regional governments to continue with their tradition of exchange by adjusting themselves to the new circumstances.

Meanwhile, in the 10th Youth Art - Poster Contest, youths from 32 member regional governments, three observers, and a non-member submitted as many as 827 artworks, the highest number of submissions in the history of the contest. With each year, a growing number of young people are submitting works of increasing quality. The contest’s reputation as a platform for cultural exchange among the youths in Northeast Asia is growing, just like our association.

In the new year, the NEAR Secretariat will make its best efforts to assist the NEAR chair in their preparations for the NEAR General Assembly and the hosting of the NEAR International Forum to encourage NEAR members to gather together offline. Your active participation will be greatly appreciated.

LIM Byung-jin
Secretary-General
The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR)
Main Activities of the Association
Main Activities of the Association

I. The 13th NEAR Working Committee

1. Overview

The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) held the 13th NEAR Working Committee at the Ulsan Exhibition & Convention Center (UECO), Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea, on September 21. The event was attended by 150 representatives from 54 member regions of five countries: China, Japan, Korea (South), Mongolia, and Russia. North Korea was absent from the event. The meeting was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NEAR member regional governments which participated in the meeting are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of Participating Members</th>
<th>Participating Member Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>12 members</td>
<td>Anhui Province, Heilongjiang Province, Henan Province, Hubei Province, Hunan Province, Jilin Province, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Shandong Province, Shanxi Province, Liaoning Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>4 members</td>
<td>Shimane Prefecture, Toyama Prefecture, Hyogo Prefecture, Aita Prefecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>9 members</td>
<td>Daegu Metropolitan City, Incheon Metropolitan City, Gyenggi-do Province, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, Gyegangnam-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>18 members</td>
<td>Arkhangai Aimag, Bayan-Ulgii Aimag, Bayankhongor Aimag, Bulgan Aimag, Govi-Altai Aimag, Govisumber Aimag, Dakhin-Uul Aimag, Dornogovi Aimag, Dornod Aimag, Orkhon Aimag, Uvurkhangai Aimag, Umnugovi Aimag, Tuv Aimag, Uvs Aimag, Khovd Aimag, Khentii Aimag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>11 members</td>
<td>Altai Region, Amur Region, Zabaykalsky Territory, Irkutsk Region, Kamchatka Territory, Krasnoyarsk Region, Primorsky Territory, Republic of Sakha, Republic of Khakassia, Tomsk Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 member</td>
<td>Novosibirsk Region (observer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Main Content

<Opening Ceremony>

During the opening ceremony, AHN Hyo-dae, deputy mayor for economic affairs, Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea, the NEAR chair, opened the event. This was followed by welcoming remarks by KIM Doo-gyum, NEAR chairperson and mayor of Ulsan Metropolitan City, opening remarks by AHN Hyo-dae, and congratulatory remarks by KIM Ok-chae, NEAR secretary-general. A presentation was given by the NEAR chair regional government titled, “A New Leap for Ulsan, the Industrial Capital.”

In his welcoming remarks, Mayor KIM Doo-gyum stressed the need to expand exchange and cooperation between local governments based on the profound common ground uniquely shared by Northeast Asians. Deputy Mayor AHN Hyo-dae stated in his opening remarks that it is essential for regional governments to cooperate in order to discuss and solve various issues, including a response to climate change and world peace.

For this reason, he said Ulsan Metropolitan City will do its best as the NEAR chair. NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae’s congratulatory remarks followed. Mr. Kim said that the NEAR secretariat will create further exchange between NEAR members hereafter and strengthen their capability by focusing on providing opportunities for young adults, the next generation, to better understand neighboring countries without prejudice.
<Main Session>

Announcement of Agenda and Resolutions

At the 13th Working Committee, the NEAR Secretariat requested the member regional governments to proceed with absentee voting on the following three agenda items by mail, considering technical issues and time limits as the working committee was held online. As a result, 69 out of 77 member regional governments except for those of North Korea, participated and passed resolutions on all three agenda items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Agenda Item 1</th>
<th>Agenda Item 2</th>
<th>Agenda Item 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction of Absentee Voting</td>
<td>Expansion of Associate Membership</td>
<td>Amendment of Provision on Operational Expenses of the General Assembly and the Working Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method of Voting

Considering the working committee was held online, the NEAR Secretariat requested the members to proceed with the absentee voting by mail, and the results were announced at the working committee.

| Resolutions | NEAR amended Article 9 (Decision-making) of the Charter so that even if members with voting rights express their intention in writing, they may be considered present at the meeting. | NEAR expanded the scope of associate membership to regions outside Northeast Asia. | NEAR amended the provision of the Charter to reflect the principle that while the regional member hosting the meeting will bear the expense of hosting the General Assembly and the Working Committee, participating regional governments should bear the cost of participation fees in accordance with customary practices. |
| NEAR passed the resolution unanimously: 69 in favor; 0 against; | NEAR passed the resolution: 63 in favor; 5 against; 1 abstention | NEAR passed the resolution: 59 in favor; 7 against; 3 abstentions |

Main Activities of NEAR

The NEAR Secretariat reported its main activities and results of the 13th NEAR General Assembly. This was followed by reports and subsequent plans on the activities of the NEAR Subcommittee on Cross-Border E-Commerce held by Henan Province, China; the Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries held by Shandong Province, China; the Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine held by Shaanxi Province, China; the Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange held by Shimane Prefecture, Japan; and the Subcommittee on Environment and subsequent plans held by Toyama Prefecture, Japan.

In addition, presentations were given on diverse themes by Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Hubei Province, China; Sejong Special Self-Governing City, and Gangwon-do Province, South Korea; Bulgan Aimag, Mongolia; and Krasnoyarsk Territory, and Kamchatka Territory, Russia. The meeting ended with the Declaration of the 13th NEAR Working Committee.
**Declaration of the 13th NEAR Working Committee**

On September 21, 2022, the 13th NEAR Working Committee, was held as an online event in Ulsan Metropolitan City, Korea. Forty-four member regional governments and one observer from five different countries, including the People’s Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation, participated in the event.

We reaffirmed NEAR’s role as a leader in multilateral regional networks in Northeast Asia. Over the last 26 years, we have made significant progress in achieving the goals of NEAR, such as promoting mutual understanding, deepening multilateral relations, and coming to a common consensus for cooperation. Based on these achievements, we will continue to play our role by clearly understanding the value of NEAR and taking unified steps to overcome the new challenges we face.

Since the last general assembly, subcommittee meetings have been held despite the breakout of natural disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, taking into consideration the subcommittee meetings in various fields among the member regional governments such as environment, disaster prevention, educational and cultural exchange, e-commerce, oceans and fisheries, we will continue to strengthen international cooperation by paying particular attention to the importance of NEAR subcommittee meetings among member regional governments.

In addition, we will strengthen communication and cooperation so that we can actively contribute to the success of international conferences hosted by member regional governments in the future.

Moreover, this working committee made resolutions on the agenda tabled for the development of the Association as follows:

1. The NEAR Charter has been amended so that even if members with voting rights express their intention in writing, they may be considered present at the general assembly and working committees.

2. The scope of associate members has been expanded to regional governments outside Northeast Asia so that they may apply for associate membership.

3. In principle, the operational expenses of the general assembly and working committee are to be borne by the member regional government hosting the meeting. However, it has been amended so that participating regional governments will bear a certain amount covering expenses according to customary practices.

We, the NEAR member regional governments, hereby resolve to do our best to implement the above agreements and resolutions through mutual cooperation.

September 21, 2022

Representatives of the member regional governments participating in the 13th NEAR Working Committee

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**II. Subcommittees**

**1. Overview**

The Subcommittee on Economy and Humanities Exchange was established in 1998 and as of 2022, 17 subcommittees are in operation and are being held annually or biennially.

**Composition of Subcommittees and Major Areas of Activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcommittee</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Established Year</th>
<th>Operating Frequency</th>
<th>Major Areas of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy and Humanities Exchange</td>
<td>Saryangdo Island, South Korea</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Promotion of trade, trade-consultation seminars, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Toyama Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Drying matter research, environment symposium, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Prevention</td>
<td>Hyogo Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Prevention of damage from disaster, enhancement of disaster prevention capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Cultural Exchange</td>
<td>Shihoro Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cultivation of human resources, promotion of cultural exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Harbin Province, Heilongjiang Province, China</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Exhibitions on tourism, promotion, cooperation forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceans and Fisheries</td>
<td>Shandong Province, China</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Use of marine resources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Resources Development</td>
<td>Magadan Region, Russia</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mining and processing mineral resources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and Climate Change</td>
<td>Shari Province, Russia</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Energy, climate change cooperative systems, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-medical Industry</td>
<td>Chongqing-tingdu, Province, South Korea</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exchange and cooperation in the medical industry, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Jilin Province, South Korea</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Exchange of information and technology on agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Republic of Sakha, Yakutia</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information and exchange on sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics and Transportation</td>
<td>HulunBuir, Inner Mongolia, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Exhibitions on logistics and cooperation forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Border E-Commerce</td>
<td>Harbin Province, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>International e-commerce industry forum, business matching, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Exchange of Human Resources</td>
<td>Jin Province, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cooperation forum on human resources projects for Northeast Asia, sharing of information on human resources and manpower resources, and exploring of ways to cooperate, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Plus</td>
<td>Harbin Province, China</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Information and exchange on innovation in science, products, and cultural management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Policy</td>
<td>Krasnoyarsk Territory, Russia</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Information on youth policy and youth-supporting areas, and exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Medicine</td>
<td>Shandong Province, China</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information on traditional medicine, and exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. 2022 Subcommittee Meetings**

**The 19th Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention**

**1. Overview**

Hyogo Prefecture held the meeting of subcommittee on disaster prevention every March and has shared its ways to prevent and reduce natural disasters with other NEAR members. However, as it became difficult to hold the subcommittee meeting offline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hyogo Prefecture...
Main Activities of the Association

1. Overview

The distributed material contains a guide listing out the types of evacuation sites and evacuation behaviors, items needed as well as the “My Evacuation Card,” which the evacuating person can fill out in advance with when, where, and how to evacuate when a natural disaster strikes. After filling it out, the person would place the card in a visible place.

The material was created in English and distributed accordingly. The material in Japanese may be found in the following website: https://web.pref.hyogo.lg.jp/kk42/hinantebiki.html. Meanwhile, instead of holding its subcommittee meeting offline, Hyogo Prefecture expressed its plans to hold the subcommittee meeting online or distribute information from now on, upon the individual request by NEAR members which show interest in learning about the natural disaster prevention measures from Hyogo Prefecture.

The 7th NEAR Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries

1. Overview

Shandong Province held the meeting of the 7th NEAR Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries in Yantai between August 9 and 11 under the name of “Northeast Asia Marine Economy Innovation and Development Forum and China Marine Economy Forum 2022”. More than 300 persons participated. Participants included NEAR member regional governments from China, Korea, and Russia, and representatives from England and Norway.

2. Main Content

This year’s subcommittee covered one main forum and five sub-forums under the theme, “New Power, New Space, and New Development”.

ZHEONG Deyan, deputy party secretary and mayor of Yantai city gave his welcoming remarks, followed by congratulatory remarks by NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae, and Vice-Governor PAN Bo of Shandong Province. Also, presidents from the Chinese Academy of Engineering and the United Kingdom’s Institute of Engineering participated and had in-depth discussions on marine economics, finance, and renewable energy industries.

In his congratulatory remarks, Mr. Kim stated that since Shandong Province held the meetings of subcommittee
on oceans and fisheries, 23 NEAR member regional governments from five Northeast Asian countries have visited Shandong, and the province has made much progress. He also added that Shandong would grow to be the Mecca of ocean industries in Northeast Asia through NEAR as the regional platform.

Shandong Province held a press conference on August 4 prior to the subcommittee meeting and introduced the NEAR activities that Shandong Province had been involved with. In particular, Shandong Province, a founding member of NEAR, served as the chair between September 2006 and September 2008. Furthermore, Shandong Province successfully held six subcommittee meetings on oceans and fisheries in Qingdao and Weihai, etc., ever since the Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries was first established in 2009. In this way, Shandong Province has contributed to exchange and cooperation in the oceans and fisheries industries of Northeast Asia.

The First NEAR Subcommittee on cross-Border E-Commerce

1. Overview

The meeting of the first NEAR Subcommittee on Cross-Border E-commerce was held in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China, on August 9. The event was attended by more than 80 representatives from 21 NEAR member regional governments of five countries: China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia.

2. Main Content

The subcommittee meeting themed, “Joint Cooperation and Mutual Win-Win” was held both online and offline. During the opening ceremony, there were congratulatory remarks delivered by HE Jinping, vice-governor of Henan Province, China, AN Xiaoda, economy vice-mayor of the 14th NEAR chair Ulsan Metropolitan City, Korea, NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae, YOKOTA Mika, vice-governor of Toyama Prefecture, Japan, and PUZANOV Pavel, deputy prime minister of Amur Region, Russia, etc. In addition, political, business, and academic representatives from 11 member regional governments of five countries, including China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia, introduced the current status of cross-border e-commerce industries.
The meeting covered a presentation on the current state of cross-border e-commerce industries, the NEAR subcommittee on e-commerce signboard hanging ceremony, and the signing of an MOU for further trade cooperation between the Office of Commerce of Henan Province and the NEAR Secretariat. In addition, as a result of the sustained efforts of the NEAR Secretariat and the government of Henan Province, an MOU was signed between the Korea Internet E-Commerce Association, KOTRA Zhengzhou Overseas Office, and the International Digital Trade Research Institute of Henan Province.

Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae said in his congratulatory remarks that he looked forward to seeing Henan Province grow into a driving force for sustainable growth in the Northeast Asian region in the field of international e-commerce through the NEAR platform. In addition, LEE Young-seok, director of the Job Creation and Economy Bureau of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, introduced the current status of e-commerce development in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and its history of exchange with Henan Province, its sister province, in his congratulatory remarks.

3. Notes

The Subcommittee on Cross-border E-commerce was established to promote cooperation and exchange in the field of cross-border e-commerce in Northeast Asia. Henan Province has actively contributed to the development of NEAR as a founding member. Moreover, Henan Province was approved to be designated as the coordinator of the NEAR Subcommittee on E-commerce at the 11th Working Committee in 2017.

The 20th Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange

1. Overview

Shimane Prefecture of Japan, the coordinator of the NEAR Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange, held the "Wings of Northeast Asia Exchange 2022" meeting in Shimane Prefecture on October 22 and 29.

The subcommittee meeting was attended by local youths and young international residents now residing in Shimane Prefecture due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants numbered 21 and 23 on October 22 and 29, respectively. The meeting of the Subcommittees on Educational and Cultural Exchange has been held every summer since 2002 to strengthen mutual understanding and friendly exchange through youth educational and cultural exchange programs.

2. Main Content

The opening ceremony on October 22 covered the opening remarks, followed by youth exchange activities, including self-introductions and icebreakers. Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae emphasized in his video congratulatory remarks that mutual respect and understanding of one another without prejudice toward the ideology or culture of neighboring countries would lead to regional peace and stability. On October 29, there were field activities such as making bamboo bowls, preparing meals, eating bamboo rice meals, walking in the forest park, and the Japanese art of paper folding origami, among other things.
The First Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine

1. Overview

The meeting of the first NEAR Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine was held in Hanzhong, Shaanxi Province, under the name, "Northeast Asian Symposium for Cooperation on Traditional Medicine," on November 28. The event was attended by 300 representatives from 26 NEAR member regions of four Northeast Asian countries, including China, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia.

2. Main Content

The event was held both online and offline, under the theme, "Development of Traditional Medicine and Building of Hygienic and Healthy Community." In the opening ceremony, congratulatory remarks were delivered by YANG Guan-jun, vice-chairman of the Committee of the Shaanxi Province Political Consultative Conference, China, NEAR Secretary-General KIM Oh-chae, LUDUPOVA Evgenia, deputy prime minister of the Republic of Buryatia, and NIKONOV Evgeny, deputy prime minister of Khabarovsk Territory, Russia, and Byambadorj, head of the Public Health Department, Mongolia. In addition, political, business, and academic representatives from 12 member regional governments of four countries, including JIN Gi-hun, ambassador for international relations in Daegu Metropolitan City, introduced the current status of traditional medicine.

In his congratulatory remarks, Secretary-General KIM Oh-chae said that he looked forward to seeing Shaanxi Province use NEAR as a platform to lead the innovative regional development in the area of traditional medicine in Northeast Asia.

3. Notes

The Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine was established to promote cooperation and exchange in the field of traditional medicine in Northeast Asia. Shaanxi Province, which joined NEAR in 2016 became the coordinator of the NEAR Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine upon approval at the 12th General Assembly held in 2018.
Main Activities of the Secretariat
Main Activities of the Secretariat

I. 2022 NEAR International Forum

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat held the 2022 NEAR International Forum at the POSCO International Center, Pohang, South Korea, under the theme “Development Strategies for Northeast Asian Farming Villages and the Agro-Food Industry,” both online and offline on April 28. It was held for the first time in three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 250 representatives from 57 member regional governments participated, the highest number of participants ever to attend in the history of NEAR. The participants were from six Asian countries: China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Russia, and Vietnam.

NEAR member regional governments which participated in the international forum are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No of Participating Members</th>
<th>Member Regional Governments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Shandong Province, Shanxi Province, Heilongjiang Province, Hunan Province, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Gansu Province, Tianjin, Jiangsu Province, Fujian Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shimane Prefecture, Toyama Prefecture, Hyogo Prefecture, Aki Prefecture, Aomori Prefecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gyeonggi-do Province, Incheon Metropolitan City, Gyeonggi-do Province, Chungcheong-buk-do Province, Jeollanam-do Province, Busan Metropolitan City, Daegu Metropolitan City, Gyeongbuk Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Gyeongsangnam-do Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ulaanbaatar, Bayan-Ulgii Aimag, Bayankhongor Aimag, Bulgan Aimag, Govi-Alta Aimag, Govisumber Aimag, Dukh-Dulzii-Uul Aimag, Dornod Aimag, Dornogovi Aimag, Dornod Aimag, Uvurkhangai Aimag, Umnugovi Aimag, Tuva Aimag, Uvs Aimag, Zavkhan Aimag, Selenge Aimag, Khovd Aimag, Khuvsgul Aimag, Khentii Aimag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Irkutsk Region, Primorsky Territory, Tomsk Region, Amur Region, Republic of Tuva, Altai Region, Republic of Buryatia, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Republic of Sakha, Kemerovo Region, Khakasski Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related Organizations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>United Council for Local Governments (UCLG), Assembly of European Regions (AER), Tripartite Cooperation Secretariat (TCSL), International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), Regions of Climate Action (R2CL), Forum for Vice-governors of the Argentine Provinces (FOVPAI), Heilongjiang Academy of Social Sciences, China, Russian Academy of Science</td>
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</table>

During his keynote speech, Mr. Lee emphasized the necessity of government programs to foster the sixth industry so as to recover rural areas facing extinction risks. He also proposed to provide joint marketing for products and services of the sixth industry in Northeast Asia.

<Presentations by Experts>

Expert presentations followed, including: ① “Rural Culture and the Sixth Industry in Japan” by Dr. ONISHI Chie, Ph.D, researcher at the Kyushu Okinawa Agricultural Research Center NARO, Japan; ② “Strategies to Foster the Sixth Industry and Ways to Attract Young Talent into Rural Areas in Northeast Asia” by Professor WANG Guangbin, head of the Rural Economy Development Planning Research Centre, Shandong Agricultural University; ③ “Strategies to Foster the Sixth Industry and Ways to Attract Young Talent into Rural Areas in Northeast Asia” by Professor WANG Guangbin, head of the Rural Economy Development Planning Research Centre, Shandong Agricultural University; ④ “Ways to Develop Industrial Agriculture in the Primorsky Territory” by Dr. KOMIN Andrey, Ph.D, president of Primorsky Territory State Council.

2. Main Content

<Opening Session>

NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae started the international forum with opening remarks. This was followed by congratulatory remarks by HA Dae-sung, vice-governor of Economic Planning of Gyeongbuk-do Province, and OU Boqian, secretary-general of the TCSL. The keynote speech by LEE Dong-phil, former minister of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs followed.
Main Activities of the Secretariat

II. Hosting the 2022 Secretariat Experience and Training Program for Local College Students

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat conducted the “2022 Secretariat Experience and Training Program for Local College Students” over two weeks, from August 8 to 19.

2. Main Content

This year’s intern students participated in several programs prepared by the Secretariat, including meetings with experts on different NEAR member countries and seconded government officials, lectures, on-the-job training, online meetings with Chinese students, visit to Gyeongsangbuk-do Provincial Government Office, and meetings with government officials, and the model NEAR International Forum.

In particular, students had opportunities to better understand the economy, society, and culture of neighboring countries in Northeast Asia, through special lectures and Q & A sessions offered by experts on different NEAR member countries, including China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia, and seconded government officials.

Furthermore, this year’s internship program covered the First Model NEAR International Forum. During the forum, students experienced the process of conducting the NEAR International Forum by planning and coordinating the model international forum themselves. The participants said, “We felt the necessity of international cooperation and efforts in diverse areas in order to revitalize exchange in the Northeast Asian region through the model international forum, which was themed, “Promotion of Exchange and Cooperation among Young Adults in Northeast Asia.” As such, this internship program allowed the NEAR interns the opportunity to experience the roles played by NEAR as an international organization pursuing to become the United Nations in the Northeast Asian region and take one step further towards their dream of becoming professionals in the field of international cooperation.
**Main Activities of the Secretariat**

### III. Holding Meetings with the NEAR Honorary Ambassadors

#### 1. Overview

NEAR honorary ambassadors were appointed in 2020 out of local opinion leaders with abundant knowledge and experience who are able to communicate directly with the community residents of each member regional government to promote NEAR. Currently there are 41 working honorary ambassadors from five countries: China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Russia. The NEAR Secretariat was planning to invite honorary ambassadors to the secretariat for meetings, but such offline meetings were rather discouraged due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the Secretariat conducted meetings both online and offline in five separate occasions with honorary ambassadors to each country for their networking and promoting of the role of NEAR.

#### 2. Main Content

**< Holding Meeting with NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to Korea>**

On May 10, the NEAR Secretariat invited two NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to Ulsan Metropolitan City and held a ceremony where the new certificates of appointment were awarded to extend the term of appointment. This award ceremony was attended by YANG Euy-seok, vice president of the Korea Energy Economics Institute and SEO Byoung-Hi, associate professor at the School of Business Administration – Finance & Accounting of UlSan National Institute of Science and Technology. They discussed how to revitalize the promotion of NEAR. Afterwards, they had a meeting with the NEAR Secretariat staff. NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae explained how he started the program to appoint NEAR ambassadors and asked them to promote NEAR hereafter. The ambassadors stressed the importance of the role played by local governments in terms of international cooperation. Then, they responded that they would make their best effort to promote NEAR in the local community.

**< Holding Online Meeting with NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to Japan>**

On June 21, the NEAR Secretariat invited the NEAR Honorary Ambassador to Aomori Prefecture, Japan and held an online meeting with him. The event was attended by SUMI Toshiyuki, NEAR Honorary Ambassador to Japan, Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae, experts on different NEAR member countries, and the Japanese government official seconded to the NEAR Secretariat. They discussed how to revitalize the promotion of NEAR.

NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae explained how he started the program to appoint NEAR ambassadors and pointed out that the NEAR member regional governments of Japan have been relatively passive in recent times. Mr. Kim asked Mr. Sumi to promote NEAR hereafter. Chairman Sumi of the NPO Aomori Korea Net, the NEAR Honorary Ambassador to Japan responded that he would pay attention to the role played by NEAR, which has been active in diverse areas. He said he would make his best effort to promote NEAR.

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3. Notes

The Secretariat Experience & Training Program was designed to give local college students an opportunity to experience what is required in the era of globalization and help them grow as experts in the field of international cooperation through training on the role of the NEAR Secretariat as an international organization, and performing tasks. The NEAR Secretariat has already conducted the program twice, each with high school and college students. The program has been highly evaluated by the participating students.
**< Holding Online Meeting with NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to China>**

On June 28, the NEAR Secretariat hosted an online meeting inviting the NEAR Honorary Ambassadors from Chinese member regional governments.

The event was attended by six Honorary Ambassadors from five different Chinese NEAR members, including Hunan Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Shandong Province, Shanxi Province, and Shaanxi Province. NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae, experts on different NEAR member countries, and the Chinese government official seconded to the NEAR Secretariat participated in the meeting and discussed ideas on how to revitalize the promotion of NEAR.

Mr. Kim stated that NEAR pursues the role of “United Nations in Northeast Asia” to overcome the so-called Asian Paradox in the region by taking the lead in exchange between local governments in Northeast Asia. The NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to China introduced the organizations they work for and proposed diverse international activities and ways of cooperation with NEAR through the use of SNS. Additionally, they replied that they would actively support the development of NEAR accordingly.

**< Holding Online Meeting with NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to Russia>**

On October 20, the NEAR Secretariat hosted an online meeting inviting the NEAR honorary ambassadors from Russian member regional governments.

The event was attended by five honorary ambassadors from five different Russian NEAR members, including the Altai Region, Irkutsk Region, the Republic of Sakha, Magadan Region, and the Republic of Khakassia. Five staff members from the Secretariat, including Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae participated in the meeting. They discussed ideas on the methods of revitalizing the promotion of NEAR, followed by a Q and A session.

Mr. Kim said that ambassadors have played an essential role in promoting NEAR through activities. He also added that they are able to communicate the significance of NEAR’s activities directly with the general public by mediating between NEAR and the community. The ambassadors introduced activities to promote NEAR and referred to ways of cooperation with Russian members as well as other NEAR members through NEAR as a platform in the fields of education, research, and economics. They also responded that they would actively support the development of NEAR heretofore.

**< Holding Online Meeting with NEAR Honorary Ambassadors to Mongolia>**

On November 4, the NEAR Secretariat hosted an online meeting inviting the NEAR honorary ambassadors from Mongolian member regional governments. The event was attended by six honorary ambassadors from five different Mongolian NEAR members, including Govi-Altai Aimag, Dornogovi Aimag, Orkhon Aimag, Selenge Aimag, and Khuvsgul Aimag. Five staff members from the Secretariat, including Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae participated in the meeting. They discussed ideas on the methods of revitalizing the promotion and listened to the opinions of the honorary ambassadors.

The ambassadors introduced activities to promote NEAR and said they would communicate along with one
another and share information. They also responded that they would actively participate in the activities promoting NEAR.

3. Notes
The NEAR Secretariat will continue to support the ambassadors with their promotional activities and provide them with opportunities to get together to communicate and exchange opinions.

IV. Participating in the Opening Ceremony for K-Blue Zone Forum Held by Gyeongsang National University

1. Overview
On January 26 and 27, Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae and two others from the NEAR Secretariat participated in the opening ceremony for the K-Blue Zone Forum held by Gyeongsang National University.

2. Main Content
The K-Blue Zone Forum was formed to discuss agricultural and rural development as well as regional development in connection with the tasks of the times: ESG, carbon neutrality, digital innovation, etc., according to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The forum commenced with the opening remarks made by LEE Yang-gu, president of the K-Blue Zone Forum, followed by the welcoming remarks delivered by KWON Soon-ki, president of Gyeongsang National University, congratulatory remarks, and keynote speech, and ended with the inaugural meeting.

Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae introduced NEAR in his congratulatory remarks and said, “I will cooperate in connecting the regional co-existence ⋅ mutual development model pursued by the K-Blue Zone Forum with the NEAR members.

3. Notes
K-Blue Zone Forum is a preparatory meeting for the International Forum for the UN SDGs Rural Area Development Strategy hosted by the Korea Rural Economic Institute and Gyeongsang National University and sponsored by the NEAR Secretariat. The NEAR Secretariat introduced experts from Mongolia and Japan, who gave presentations and participated in the discussions during the main event held on February 15.

V. Participating in Online Meeting of the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum

1. Overview
The NEAR Secretariat took part in the main online session of the 18th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum on March 3, hosted by NEAR member Krasnoyarsk Territory, Russia. The forum was held between March 2 and 4.

The forum themed, “Siberia: Economy of Future,” was attended by many Russian figures in political and business circles, such as Deputy Prime Minister Viktoria ABRAMCHENKO of the Russian Federation, Plenipotentiary Representative to the Siberian Federal District Anatoly SERYSHEV, Governor Alexander USS of Krasnoyarsk Territory, experts, and businesspersons participated.

This year the forum was conducted online and offline. Approximately 44,000 people from a total of 79 different countries participated.

2. Main Content
Three members of the NEAR Secretariat, including CHOI Ju-hwa, director of the International Cooperation Department, participated in the forum online.

Economic experts who attended the forum said that the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum remains as a platform for high-level talks even in the current global economic recession.

They also stressed that it could help Russia strengthen its cooperation with Asian countries by utilizing the potential of the Siberian region.

Furthermore, as a result of this forum, 37 investment project contracts that amounted to RUB 8.2 billion (about USD 600 million) were signed.
3. Notes
The Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum was launched in 2004, and this year marks its eighteenth run. It is one of the three major Russian economic forums together with the Eastern Economic Forum and the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). This year, the forum was conducted online, reaching 1.5 million views, the highest number in history.

VI. Giving a Special Lecture at the Pohang Medical Center

1. Overview
On March 30, NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae gave a special lecture on the topic, “The Japanese Royal Family and the Korean Peninsula in Ancient Times,” to about 100 employees of Pohang Medical Center.

2. Main Content
During this special lecture, Mr. Kim showed through historical sources that the southern part of the Korean peninsula and the Yamato court were political and military allies until the end of the 7th century AD. Thus, the people of both countries should not be immersed in the memories of modern and contemporary history but must regain the spirit of our forefathers. He also emphasized the need to make efforts for the common prosperity of Asia through genuine historical reconciliation.

VII. Attending the Daegu•Gyeongbuk Public Diplomacy Symposium 2022

1. Overview
On June 3, Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae attended the Daegu • Gyeongbuk Public Diplomacy Symposium 2022 as a panelist. The symposium was jointly hosted by the Korea Foundation and Keimyung University.

2. Main Content
The symposium was themed “Public Diplomacy in the Global Era and Further Public Diplomacy by Local Governments.” Presentations were given on the plans for cooperation in public diplomacy between central and local governments and the importance of public diplomacy by local governments with relevant examples. Mr. Kim introduced NEAR’s role as a multilateral exchange platform for local governments in Northeast Asia. He presented ways to expand traditional public diplomacy conducted by local governments, mainly conducted bilaterally, by using multilateral international organizations like NEAR.

VIII. Visiting Tuv Aimag, Mongolia

1. Overview
Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae and five staff members of the NEAR Secretariat visited Tuv Aimag in Mongolia from July 8 to 9, to participate in the Naadam Festival.

2. Main Content
They met with Vice-Governor Ts. Bumanbuyan and S. Magnaiuzyr, director of the Administrative Management Department, Governor’s Office of Tuv Aimag. They also invited Tuv Aimag, to the NEAR Working Committee.
scheduled to be held in Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea this coming September and discussed ways to strengthen exchange between the NEAR Secretariat and NEAR members. Then, they visited the Gangneung Agriculture Town in Mongolia, which was established with the assistance of Gangwon-do Province, Korea. On July 9, the Secretariat staff members participated in the opening ceremony of the Naadam Festival and had lunch hosted by the governor of Tuv Aimag. Then, they participated in the Naadam Festival. This year’s Naadam Festival was held for the first time in three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Naadam Festival, one of the ten festivals of the world, provided diverse performances and sports events in which the residents of Tuv Aimag participated, offering much to be seen and enjoyed.

IX. Holding an Online-Offline Meeting between Korean and Chinese Students

1. Overview
The NEAR Secretariat held the Online-Offline Meeting between Korean and Chinese College Students on Friday, August 12. The event was attended by 12 students from eight different Korean universities who participated in the NEAR Secretariat Experience and Training Program and six Chinese students who are majoring in the Korean language at the Yantai University of Technology, Shandong Province, China, which is a NEAR member.

2. Main Content
The participating students spent time exchanging thoughts about the cultures and manners of the two countries, Korea-China relations, and ways to promote exchange and cooperation between Northeast Asian young-adults during the post-COVID-19 era, as well as ways to strengthen cooperation between Northeast Asian local governments. Both the Korean and Chinese students said that they have much in common as they share the same roots in Asian civilization and mentioned the important role of NEAR, which is taking the lead in bringing about the subsequent peaceful development of Northeast Asia.

X. Attending the Reception to Mark the 30th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Korea and China

1. Overview
The reception to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and China hosted by the Chinese Consulate-General in Busan was held in Busan Metropolitan City on August 19. The event was attended by more than 240 representatives from the political, business, academic, and media fields and overseas Chinese organizations within the competent jurisdiction of the Chinese Consulate-General in Busan.

2. Main Content
Three staff members of the NEAR Secretariat, including Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae, attended the event. Acting Consul-General Guo PENG’s opening remarks were followed by video congratulatory messages by PARK Hyeong-jun, mayor of Busan Metropolitan City, and HONG Nam-phyo, mayor of Changwon City. Then, congratulatory remarks by HEO Nam-sik, former mayor of Busan Metropolitan City, ambassadors for international relations in Busan Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, and Gyeongsangnam-do Province followed. Mr. Peng stressed the success of cooperation over the past 30 years since Korea and China established diplomatic relations. He also stated that he would look forward to cooperation between local governments of the two countries thereafter.

3. Notes
During the reception, there was an award ceremony for “My Korean Story/ My Chinese Story: UCC Contest” hosted by the Busan Metropolitan City, Busan Foundation for International Cooperation, and the Chinese Consulate-General in Busan. The two countries gave traditional performances during the event and celebrated the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and China.
XI. Delivering a Congratulatory Message at the 2022 Taiyuan Low Carbon Development Forum Hosted by Shanxi Province, China

1. Overview

The 2022 Taiyuan Low Carbon Development Forum was held both online and offline by Shanxi Province, a NEAR member, between September 1 and 3. The event conducted under the theme, “Energy, Two Carbon Policies (carbon neutrality and carbon peak), and Development” proceeded with diverse activities, including forum on hydrogen economy, carbon and green finance, low carbon application technology, and 2022 China (Taiyuan) International Energy Industry Expo.

2. Main Content

The forum’s opening ceremony was attended both online and offline by key figures, including Vice Premier Han ZHENG of China, Prime Minister Katrín JAKOBSDÓTTIR of Iceland, and Minister Tamar ZANDBERG, Ministry of Environment of Israel. Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae delivered a congratulatory video message at the opening ceremony. Mr. Kim stated his appreciation for Shanxi’s efforts in seeking a prompt response to climate change and sustainable development.

During the forum, MOUs for 71 investment projects worth about CNY 88.53 billion were signed.

3. Notes


XII. Participating in the Reception to Celebrate the 73rd Anniversary of the Founding of the People’s Republic of China

1. Overview

The Chinese Consulate-General in Busan held an online reception to celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China on September 29. The event was attended by more than 100 representatives from political, economic, media, Chinese overseas associations, and international students within the competent jurisdiction. Three staff members from the Secretariat, including CHOI Ju-hwa, director of the International Cooperation Department participated in the event online.
2. Main Content

As this year marks the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and China, NEAR Chairperson KIM Doo-gyum, mayor of Ulsan Metropolitan City, PARK Hyeong-jun, mayor of Busan, Governor LEE Cheol-woo of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, and Governor PARK Wan-su of Gyeongsangnam-do Province delivered their congratulatory video messages and praised Korea-China relations.

In his opening remarks, acting Chinese Consul General Tu Jingchang introduced the history of economic and societal development over the past 70 years and stated that he would look forward to a bright future for the bilateral relations, as the leaders of two countries expressed their intent to cooperate. He also stated that the Chinese Consulate-General in Busan would make further efforts for better exchange and cooperation among local governments of two countries.

3. Notes

During the reception, China’s promotional video watching and performances conducted by Chinese overseas residents followed.

XIII. Participating in the 61st Tamna Cultural Festival Held in Jeju

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat was invited by Jeju Special-Governing Province to participate in the 61st Jeju Tamna Cultural Festival between October 7 and 9.

The NEAR Secretariat arranged performers from Tuv Aimag, Mongolia, a NEAR member, who delivered a performance accordingly during the Cultural Exchange Festivals program upon request by Jeju. Secretariat staff also assisted with consecutive interpretation.

2. Main Content

The staff members of the NEAR Secretariat discussed ways to strengthen exchange and cooperation between the NEAR Secretariat and Jeju Special-Governing Province with officers from the Peace External Cooperation Division.

Jeju Special Self-Governing Province currently has a sister relationship with Sakhalin Region, Russia. Jeju Provincial Council visited Tuv Aimag, Mongolia last September and discussed further exchange. As such, Jeju said that it would do its utmost to revitalize exchange with Mongolia and Russia, but expressed their hope for steady exchange.

During the reception, China’s promotional video watching and performances conducted by Chinese overseas residents followed.
The Peace External Cooperation Division of the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, which was in charge of the Tamna Cultural Festival, arranged flights for the performers from Tuv Aimag and provided assistance for a successful event. The division also said that it would invite performers from other NEAR member regional governments as well as those from Tuv Aimag to the next Tamna festival, thereby playing a leading role as a platform for cultural exchange.

In addition, Lkham Khishigjargal, expert on Mongolia of the NEAR Secretariat arranged performers from Tuv Aimag, Mongolia, a NEAR member to visit and deliver a performance during the Cultural Exchange Festivals program upon request by Jeju and assisted with consecutive interpretation.

3. Notes

This year marks the 61st anniversary of the Jeju Tamna Cultural Festival. The event was themed, “Let’s Get Stronger with the True Spirit of Tamna,” and conducted 17 different programs, showcasing its charm.

XIV. Holding the 10th NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat has held the NEAR Youth NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest ever since 2013 in order to provide the youth in Northeast Asia with good opportunities to further mutual understanding of the cultures and traditions of neighboring countries through exchange of artworks.

2. Main Content

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and unstable situation in Northeast Asia, as many as 627 submissions, the largest number of artworks in the history of the NEAR Youth Art Contest, were submitted by 32 NEAR members, three observers, and a non-member of five countries: China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, and Russia.

Country | No. of Participants | Participating Members(32 members / 3 observers / 1 non-member)
--- | --- | ---
China | 565 | Anhui Province(65), Shandong Province(97), Hunan Province(26), Shaanxi Province(13), Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region(73), Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region(43), Tianjin City(79), Gansu Province(29), Fujian Province(14)
Japan | 122 | Akita Prefecture(7), Toyama Prefecture(25), Hyogo Prefecture(76), Shimane Prefecture(13), Miyagi Prefecture(1)
Korea | 64 | Incheon Metropolitan City(1), Daegu Metropolitan City(1), Ulsan Metropolitan City(1), Gwangju Metropolitan City(2), Gyeonggi-do Province(15), Chungcheongbuk-do Province(1), Jeollabuk-do Province(1), Jeonbuk-do Province(1), Gyeongsangbuk-do Province(1)
Mongolia | 19 | Dornod Province(11), Uvs Province(1), Khentii Province(1), Uvurkhangai Province(6)
Russia | 57 | Kamchatka Territory(2), Tomsk Region(10), Irkutsk Region(10), Krasnoyarsk Territory(16), Sakhalin Region(2), Khakassia Territory(1)

The Secretariat invited five external examiners to assess the submissions. As a result, the first prize went to “Inheritance” by ZHOU Xinle from Anhui Province, China.

In addition, a total of 201 winners were named on the list of awardees: five second prize winners, 20 participation winners, 170 special recognition award winners, and five special award winners.

3. Notes

The NEAR Secretariat will send out certificates of awards and special gifts to the awardees and certificates of participation to all participants. In addition, there have been travelling exhibitions of award-winning works within Gyeongsangbuk-do Province since 2019. There will also be exhibitions of award-winning works in the Korean NEAR member regions next year.
Second Prize: "Mongolian Lady" by GUNSMAA Shinesuvd, from the First School, Dornogovi Aimag, Mongolia

Special Recognition Award: "Appreciation for the Arts Showing Emotional Feelings" by JANG Da Yeon, from Indong High School, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, Korea

Participation Award: "Wa"-Japanese Culture" by SENNO Toka, from Gamagori Middle School, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan

Special Recognition Award: "Pancake Week" by Leo SHUSHAKOV, from the Second Junior Art School, Tomsk Region, Russia
XV. Exhibitions of the NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest Award-Winning Works from Five Northeast Asian Countries

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat selected around 100 award-winning artworks from the past six years to be featured in the travelling exhibitions in South Korea. Also, in commemorating the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and China, four Chinese NEAR member regional governments, including Hunan Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Shandong Province, and Shaanxi Province, held online and offline exhibitions of award-winning works of the NEAR Youth Art · Poster contest.

2. Main Content

The travelling exhibitions took place from September 1 to November 25 for about three months in Sejong City Library, Songdam Manri Exhibition Hall in Sejong, Jeollanam-do Public Library, Dongrak Hall, Gyeongsangbuk-do Provincial Government Complex, and Incheon Metropolitan City Office of Educational East Asia Global Education Institute. In doing so, local residents were able to experience the cultures and traditions of Northeast Asia through artworks. Moreover, the NEAR Secretariat created video clips and image files of the award-winning works to share with Chinese members. In response, four Chinese NEAR member regional governments exhibited the artworks online by posting them on the government websites, the WeChat official site, and national exhibition halls. The online exhibitions are expected to promote NEAR among the Chinese youth as there has been a steady increase in the number of young people participating in the NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest.
Main Activities of the Secretariat

|^Dongrak Hall, Gyeongsangbuk-do Provincial Government Complex (2022. 10. 17. ~ 10. 28.)

|^Exhibitions in Hunan Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Shandong Province, and Shaanxi Province, China

|^Incheon Metropolitan City Office of Educational East Asia Global Education Institute (2022. 11. 14. ~ 11. 25.)
The 13th NEAR Working Committee

Cooperation Activities with Related Organizations
Cooperation Activities with Related Organizations

I. Participating in the World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGo)’s 2022 Kick-off Event

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat participated in the online 2022 WeGo Kick-off event on February 23. More than 100 people participated, such as WeGo’s domestic members, partners, and 30 VIPs, including ambassadors from Algeria, Azerbaijan, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Iran, Mexico, Oman, Peru, United Arab Emirates, and Vietnam.

2. Main Content

The Mayor of Seoul and WeGo President OH Se-hoon opened the event by welcoming WeGo’s new initiatives for 2022. It was followed by Secretary-General PARK Jung Sook’s opening remarks. H.E. Bruno FIGUEROA, Mexico’s Ambassador to Seoul, gave the congratulatory remarks, and a keynote speech was given by Danil KERIMI, co-founder of Edgelands Institute.

The WeGo Smart City Champions Program, a youth program, as well as the signing of MOUs with cooperative organizations, took place during the main session.

3. Notes

The WeGo, established by 50 founding members in 2010, is an international organization committed to assisting members with capacity-building and innovation for cities into smart sustainable cities and city development. The WeGo has more than 213 cities, businesses, and organizations as members.

II. Holding Online Discussions with the ICLEI over Cooperation

1. Overview

On April 8, staff members from the NEAR Secretariat held an online meeting for cooperation with LIE Ge, strategy manager, and TANG Youde, program manager of the Beijing Office from the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat.

2. Main Content

The NEAR Secretariat introduced its current international exchange programs and activities involving Chinese NEAR members, including the Subcommittee on Energy and Climate Change, for which Shanxi Province is currently serving as coordinator, as well as possible mutual exchange with the ICLEI. In addition, the NEAR Secretariat sought cooperation with the ICLEI in its current projects, and vice versa.

3. Notes

The ICLEI is a global network of over 2,500 local governments of 125 countries committed to sustainable development. In order to attain sustainable development, the ICLEI emphasizes the roles and practices of local governments. The ICLEI is headquartered in Bonn, Germany; and the East Asia Secretariat is located in Seoul, Korea. In addition, the ICLEI signed an MOU with the NEAR Secretariat in 2016.
III. TCS Secretary-General and Staff Members Visit to the NEAR Secretariat and Cooperation Meeting

1. Overview
On April 29, Secretary-General OU Boqian and the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) staff members visited the NEAR Secretariat. Ms. Ou met with Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae and exchanged opinions on cooperation between NEAR and the TCS.

2. Main Content
Mr. Kim started by stating that NEAR plays a similar role to the United Nations in the region by taking the lead in grassroots exchange between local governments in Northeast Asia, where the so-called Asian Paradox exists. Then he proposed future inter-organizational cooperation with the TCS in various fields. Ms. Ou said that this year marks the start of another decade of development. Ms. Ou hoped that the TCS would make its best efforts to strengthen cooperation in diverse areas among China, Japan, and Korea over the next decade and that the two organizations would develop better cooperative relations hereafter.

3. Notes
The TCS is an international organization established with a vision to promote peace and shared prosperity among the Republic of Korea, China, and Japan. Upon the agreement signed and ratified by each of the three governments, the TCS was officially established in Seoul in September 2011. Ms. Ou took office as the sixth Secretary-General in September 2021.

IV. Online Meeting with the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences

1. Overview
On Thursday, June 9, Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae held an online meeting with Director DA Zhigang of the Northeast Asian Institute of the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and other experts on the Korean peninsula to discuss methods of mutual cooperation.

2. Main Content
Secretary-General Kim stressed that he looked forward to further actual collaboration in diverse areas between NEAR and the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, since they signed an MOU for cooperation. Moreover, he also asked the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences to participate actively in different events such as NEAR subcommittee meetings.

In particular, Mr. Da expressed his gratitude to Mr. Kim, who had visited the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences immediately after having started his new post at NEAR. Mr. Da mentioned that he was glad to see that NEAR had grown since it was founded and now has a membership of 79 regional governments from six countries in Northeast Asia.

In addition, in June 2016, Mr. Da stated that the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences had founded the “Association of Think Tanks in Northeast Asia” which consists of 50 academic institutions in Northeast Asia.
from five countries in Northeast Asia: China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Russia. He stated that he would actively support the development of the NEAR Secretariat through frequent exchange.

3. Notes

Meanwhile, the NEAR Secretariat signed an MOU with the Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences in June 2017 for mutual cooperation. As a result, researcher LEE Yang was seconded to the NEAR Secretariat in 2018.

V. Participating in the International Forum for Trilateral Cooperation Hosted by the TCS

1. Overview

On June 14, Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae and three staff members of the NEAR Secretariat participated in the International Forum for Trilateral Cooperation, which was held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Seoul. It was hosted by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS), an international organization based in Seoul. At the international forum, which was themed, “Future-Oriented Trilateral Cooperation: Lasting Peace, Common Prosperity, Shared Culture,” well-known scholars and policymakers from three countries came together and shared new insights on the political environment, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural relations.

2. Main Content

In the forum, TCS Secretary-General OU Boqian gave the opening speech, followed by congratulatory remarks by Ambassador AIBOSHI Koichi of Japan to Korea, Ambassador XING Haiming of China to Korea, and First Vice Minister CHO Hyun-dong of Foreign Affairs of Korea. Keynote speeches by Governor HIROSE Katsusada of Oita Prefecture of Japan, Former Vice Chairman ZHANG Ping of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee of China, and Former Prime Minister KIM Hwang-sik of Korea followed.

During the main sessions, presentations and discussions titled, “Engage to Embrace,” “A New Chapter,” and “From the Past to the Future” were held. Q & A sessions followed. Secretary-General Kim, who was invited to the VIP luncheon, promoted subsequent exchange and cooperation through networking with politicians, diplomats, and economists.
VI. Participating in the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)-UN ECOSOC Partnership Forum

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat participated in the UCLG-UN ECOSOC Partnership Forum via Zoom which was themed, “Build back from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development,” which was held between February 2 and 3 both online and offline. About 600 participants from 56 countries and 237 organizations attended the main session, while about 300 people participated in the spotlight session.

2. Main Content

The main session emphasized equal vaccination, overcoming differences through information, the necessity of long-term health policies, the government aid programs desperately needed, and the strengthening of partnerships between developed countries and underdeveloped countries required to overcome the inequality gap. Moreover, highlight was given to the importance of the participation of socially vulnerable classes, including women, children, youth, and minorities in the decision-making process, to achieve the goal of sustainable development.

What followed was the spotlight session where Jose Manuel RIBEIRO, mayor of Valongo, Portugal, emphasized in his presentation that central governments, local governments, citizens, politicians, and entrepreneurs should put their collaborative efforts together into overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, Thomas GEORGE, the global leader of UNICEF’s international team, pointed out the importance of the role of local governments in recognizing and publicizing the issue of serious inequality as well as the desperate need for capacity-strengthening.

3. Notes

UCLG was founded by combining IULA and UTO. Currently, its membership consists of 240,000 local governments from 140 countries and 175 organizations, the largest inter-local governmental organization.

VII. Participating in the 2022 Daejeon UCLG World Congress

1. Overview

The NEAR Secretariat participated in the 2022 Daejeon UCLG World Congress held at the Daejeon Convention Center on October 14. The 2022 World Summit was held between October 10 and 14 for five days under the theme, “Local and Regional Governments Breaking Through as One.” It proceeded with the official assembly track, local4action track, town hall track, and Daejeon track.

2. Main Content

During the sessions, best practices for overcoming the crisis in international solidarity were introduced. In addition, solutions were sought to new issues such as the infringement of human rights caused by new technology in the new era of the fourth digital transformation.

In particular, during the Daejeon track sessions on “Science, Technology, and the Future Local Governance Model” and “New Technology and Human Rights,” the need for a new local government model in public administration in the fourth digital transformation era was voiced, as well as new conflict-resolution policies for socially neglected classes and less privileged provinces amid such change. Furthermore, during the Local Government Associations (LGAs)’s Forum: A Conversation between Presidents and CEOs from Different LGAs, it was reaffirmed that LGAs representing each country must respond jointly to crises and achieve the SDGs in close collaboration with government agencies.

3. Notes

UCLG World Congress meets every third year hosted by the UCLG Secretariat. The Seventh World Congress was held in Daejeon Metropolitan City in 2022.
VIII. Participating in the Marine Ecological Environment in the East Sea Region and Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Development Seminar

1. Overview

On November 14, three staff members of the NEAR Secretariat, including CHO Sun-hwa, deputy director of the International Cooperation Department, participated in the Marine Ecological Environment in the East Sea Region and Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Development Seminar, which was hosted by the Eurasia One East Sea Forum. The forum was attended by its members and experts in diverse areas who participated and discussed cooperative methods in the East Sea region.

2. Main Content

In the opening session, ZONG Jin-ho, president of One East Sea Forum, gave the opening speech, followed by the welcoming remarks by KIM Mu-hwan, president of POSTECH. Then, congratulatory remarks by KIM Hak-dong, CEO of POSCO; KIM Nam-il, head of the East Sea Rim Regional Headquarters; HAE Han-cheol, chairperson of Gyeongsangbuk-do Council; KIM Byung-wook, a member of the National Assembly in Pohang City, and keynote speech by YANG Mu-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies followed.

During the main session, lectures under the themes, “One East Sea, a Story of Sea” and “Connect Two Koreas Based on New Low Carbon Eco-Friendly Steel Act” were followed by ten different policy proposals. In particular, BAE Gi-chan, former Secretary-General of the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council, gave a presentation on the role of local governments in revitalizing exchange and cooperation among four countries in the East Sea region. During the presentation, he referred to NEAR as a leading forum for exchange and collaboration between local governments in the East Sea region.

The Secretariat staff members listened to the presentations on issues that relate to NEAR subcommittee meetings, such as environment, traditional medicine, and marine fisheries. In addition, after spending some time networking, they encouraged the speakers to participate in the upcoming NEAR international forum and subcommittee meetings.

3. Notes

One East Sea Forum was founded in September 2019 with a vision for the East Sea as a sea for the entire Eurasian continent. It is a non-profit organization, having conducted inter-Korean economic cooperation and Eurasia-related projects on culture, art, sports, tourism, and education.
International Cooperative Networking
On March 24, NEAR Secretary-General KIM Ok-chae sent a congratulatory letter to Mr. Hase and asked Ishikawa Prefecture to continue in its establishment of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in 1996.

Ishikawa Prefecture joined the North East Asia Regional Convention in 1995 as a founding member and greatly contributed to the development and cooperation of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR).

KIM Seo Hyun, Expert on Japan, and KIM Eunjung, Expert on English, Newly Appointed

On January 25, Secretary General KIM Ok-chae held an online meeting with DOKSEN Hajes, Director of Living, Environment, and Culture Department to discuss plans for cooperation between Toyama Prefecture and the NEAR Secretariat.

Director Dicken gave a detailed explanation of how the Toyama Prefecture official scheduled to be seconded to the Secretariat in April would perform their duties in Toyama Prefecture for internal reasons. Furthermore, he promised that there would be no disruptions, and Secretary-General Kim accepted the proposal.

NISSUN Aya, an official seconded from Toyama Prefecture to perform her duties in the local office on April 1, was appointed as a secretary to the NEAR Secretariat.

Seconded Official from Mongolia Batsaikhan Munkhtsetseg Completes Her Term of Appointment and New Official Enkhbat Munkhtsatsral Arrives at the NEAR Secretariat

Batsaikhan Munkhtsetseg, a government official seconded from Dundgovi Aimag, Mongolia, completed her two-year term of appointment on October 19.

Enkhbat Munkhtsatsral, a government official seconded from Darkhan-Uul Province, Mongolia, will perform his duties at the NEAR Secretariat starting on October 20.

Seconded Official from China Lin Yun Reports for Duty to the NEAR Secretariat

Ms. Lin will promote cooperative projects with Chinese member regional governments, conduct online business consultations, and enhance communication between NEAR and China.

Ms. Lin, originally from Guandong Province, China, obtained her master’s degree in social sciences at the University of Sciences and Technology in London and her master’s degree in international relations at Peking University. She has over 10 years of experience dealing with China in the International Cooperation Department of the NEAR Secretariat.

Seconded Official from Mongolia Enkhbat Munkhtsatsral Arrives at the NEAR Secretariat

Enkhbat Munkhtsatsral, a seconded official from Mongolia, will perform his duties at the NEAR Secretariat starting on October 20.

KIM Ok-chae, the Fifth Secretary-General Resigns from His Position on November 30

KIM Ok-chae, the fifth NEAR Secretary-General resigned from his position on November 30, as he has been appointed to the National Assembly, where he will serve as a member of the Committee on Education and Culture.

Lin Pei, Expert on China Newly Appointed

Lin Pei, a new expert on China, will perform his duties at the NEAR Secretariat starting on December 12.
1. Establishment of the Secretariat

In 2004, a standing office of a four-year term was adopted at the 5th General Assembly held in Heilongjiang Province, China. Accordingly, the operation of a permanent Secretariat was decided at the General Assembly, as Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, proposed to attract a permanent Secretariat on the condition that Gyeongsangbuk-do Province would cover the entire costs. Later, at the 8th General Assembly held by the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China, in 2012, it was decided that the permanent Secretariat would be located in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, to ensure consistent operational practices of the Secretariat.

2. Secretariat Organization and Personnel

The Secretariat is managed by the Secretary-General and the two-part system (Department of Planning and Public Relations and Department of International Cooperation), and it is staffed by experts and government officials seconded from Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, Mongolian, and Russian regional governments.

3. Budget

The operating costs of the Secretariat are approximately KRW 1.5 billion (USD 1.28 million / CNY 8.94 million / JPY 140 million), and they are covered by Gyeongsangbuk-do Province (70 percent) and Pohang City (30 percent) of South Korea.

4. Tasks

A. Coordinating between member regional governments;
B. Supporting the operation and execution of decisions made by the General Assembly, Working Committee, and Subcommittees;
C. Conducting projects of the Secretariat such as the NEAR International Forum, Working-level Workshop, Northeast Asia Young Leaders Forum, etc.;
D. Developing and investing in exchange programs for the development of the Association;
E. Establishing networks between international organizations and regional research institutes;
F. Conducting international public relations and operating the Honorary Ambassador system;
G. Preparing business plans, annual reports, and accounting reports; and
H. Budgeting and executing the budget.

5. Secretariat Staff Members
Appendix

- Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments
- Regulations on the Establishment and Operation of NEAR Subcommittees
- Regulations on the Membership Fees
Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

Enacted on September 12, 1998
Amended on October 21, 1998
Amended on September 11, 2002
Amended on September 8, 2004
Amended on October 28, 2010
Amended on October 22, 2014
Amended on September 27, 2016
Amended on September 29, 2018
Amended on September 21, 2022

Preamble
In the spirit of reciprocity and equality, representatives of regional governments in the Northeast Asian region, which has unlimited potential to contribute to the international community, have resolved to unite our efforts to accomplish co-development in the region and to contribute to world peace by promoting exchange and cooperation in all fields of administration, economy, and culture. Accordingly, the representatives have agreed to the present Charter of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments to accomplish these noble aims. They hereby establish an international organization known as the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments.

Chapter 1 Name and Purposes of the Association

Article 1 (Name) This organization shall be named “The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments” (hereinafter referred to as “the Association”).

Article 2 (Purposes) In the spirit of reciprocity and equality, the Association has the purposes of pursuing the joint development of the Northeast Asian region and, at the same time, contributing to world peace by building trust based on mutual understanding through the establishment of networks for exchange and cooperation among member regional governments.

Article 3 (Agenda) The “Association” shall perform the following:
1. Regularly hold the General Assembly of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments;
2. Collect and distribute information on economic and technological development within the region;
3. Support and execute projects related to exchange and cooperation;
4. Review projects necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Association.

Chapter 2 Scope of Membership and Rights & Obligations of Members

Article 4 (Scope of Membership) The members of the Association shall be the regional governments of the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation, which have agreed with the purposes of the Association and obtained the approval of membership by the General Assembly. However, the scope can be expanded by a decision of the General Assembly. (Amended on September 27, 2016)

Article 4-2 (Scope of Associate Membership) An associate member of the “Association” shall be a regional government located outside Northeast Asia which has agreed with the purposes of the “Association” and whose application for associate membership has been approved by the General Assembly. (Amended on September 21, 2022)

Article 5 (Rights and Obligations of Members) A member shall have the right to participate in various projects and activities performed by the Association and the obligation to comply with the provisions stipulated in the present Charter.

Article 5-2 (Rights and Obligations of Associate Members) An associate member shall have neither the right to vote nor the right to run for election, as set forth in Article 7 and Article 9.1. (Newly Enacted on September 27, 2016)

Chapter 3 Organization and Functions

Section 1 The General Assembly

Article 6 (Structure and Operation) The General Assembly is the supreme legislative body of the Association, which consists of heads of member regional governments. The General Assembly is held biennially. (Amended on September 27, 2016)

Article 7 (Executives) The General Assembly shall be given due authority to appoint executives to positions specified in the paragraphs below:
1. The General Assembly shall designate one person as the chairperson who represents the Association.
2. Each country shall have an auditor. Auditors shall be elected from director-general or director level government officials at the General Assembly. The auditor’s term of office is the same as the chairperson’s, as stipulated in the first paragraph. (Amended on September 27, 2016)
3. Subject to the Regulations on the Membership Fee System, the right to vote and run for election for the chairperson and the auditor position under paragraphs 1 and 2 can be restricted. (Newly Enacted on September 27, 2016)

Article 8 (Functions) The General Assembly shall perform the functions as follows:
1. Decide on the admission and dismissal of members or associate members; (Amended on September 27, 2016)
2. Determine membership fees;
3. Amend the Charter;
4. Decide on the termination and liquidation of the Association;
5. Determine the location of the Secretariat;
6. Appoint auditors;
7. Approve the budget, settlement of accounts, and project plans;
8. Approve the provisions stipulated in the Regulations on the Membership Fee System; (Newly Enacted on September 27, 2016)
9. Determine the agenda for the next General Assembly;
10. Determine and execute business plans of the Association; and
11. Other functions deemed necessary.
Article 9 (Decision-making) Decisions at the General Assembly shall be made in accordance with the following paragraphs:

1. Each member regional government shall have one vote. However, the right to vote may be restricted in certain situations under the Regulations on the Membership Fee System. <Amended on September 27, 2016>

2. Decisions on important questions in accordance with paragraphs 1 through 5 of Article 8 shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the members voting with more than half the members present. <Amended on September 27, 2016>

3. Decisions on other questions in accordance with paragraphs 6 through 11 of Article 8 shall be made by more than half the members present and voting. <Amended on September 27, 2016>

4. Members with voting rights are considered present at the meeting if they express their intentions in writing. <Newly Enacted on September 27, 2016>

Article 9-2 (Decisions Delegated to the Working Committee)

1. When the General Assembly is not held, decisions on the questions under paragraphs 1, 7, and 8 of Article 8 can be delegated to the Working Committee. <Newly Enacted on September 27, 2016>

Section 2 Working Committee

Article 10 (Organization and Operation)

1. The Working Committee consists of director-general level government officials nominated by the head of each member regional government. The executive or chairperson of the Working Committee will convene the meeting in the year before the General Assembly is scheduled to be held. However, if deemed necessary by the executive of the Working Committee, an ad hoc working committee meeting may be convened. <Newly Enacted on October 22, 2014> <Amended on October 29, 2018>

2. The chairperson of the Working Committee shall be the deputy head of the chair regional government.

3. The chairperson of the Working Committee shall report the results of the meeting to the General Assembly.

4. For the smooth operation of individual projects, a separate subcommittee or subcommittees for each field of work may be organized as a supporting body of the Working Committee. However, the newly established subcommittees shall be reported to the General Assembly. <Newly Enacted on October 21, 1998> <Revised on October 29, 2018>

Article 11 (Functions) The Working Committee shall perform the functions as follows:

1. Discuss business plans and individual projects;
2. Draft annual reports and audit reports;
3. Coordinate opinions among members;
5. Decide on the issues delegated by the General Assembly to the Working Committee;
6. Other issues deemed necessary.

Section 3 The Secretariat

Article 12 (Organization and Operation) The Secretariat is a standing body of the Association. Each member regional government may set up a liaison office if necessary. The Secretariat will remain in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province. In unavoidable circumstances, however, the location of the Secretariat may be subject to change upon the resolution of the General Assembly. <Amended on October 22, 2014>

Article 13 (Executives and Staff Members) The Secretariat shall have the following executives and staff members:

1. The Secretary-General shall be one person. The Secretary-General shall be recommended by the head of the member regional government where the Secretariat is located and appointed by the Association chair.

2. The executives and staff members of the Secretariat shall be comprised of government officials seconded by the Association in principle. However, when deemed necessary by the Secretary-General, it may be composed differently upon approval by the chairperson of the Association.

Article 14 (Functions) The Secretariat shall perform the functions as follows:

1. Plan and execute the budget;
2. Draft business plans, annual reports, and accounting reports;
3. Liaise with and coordinate members;
4. Execute the decisions made by the General Assembly and the Working Committee; and
5. Other functions deemed necessary.

Article 15 (Finance) The Secretariat shall set up a special account, and it shall be funded by membership fees and other miscellaneous incomes.

2. Accounting matters shall tentatively be carried out in accordance with the following paragraphs:

1) The members of the Association shall pay membership fees, and the matters necessary for the management and operation of membership fees shall be prescribed in the Regulations on the Membership Fee System. <Amended on September 27, 2016>

2) All operational expenses incurred for hosting the General Assembly and the Working Committee shall be borne as follows:

A. The total expenses shall be borne in principle by the regional government hosting the meeting. However, a specified amount covering travel expenses shall be borne by participating regional governments.

B. If a member regional government is apparently unable to bear a significant portion of the expense due to unavoidable circumstances such as natural disasters, etc., a reasonable measure of fee reduction may be individually taken upon agreement by member regional governments. <Amended on September 21, 2022>

3. The operational expenses of the Secretariat shall be borne by the member regional government which hosts the Secretariat.

4. Expenses for other individual exchange and cooperation projects shall be covered by the member regional government proposing the projects. However, such expenses may be shared among the participating member regional governments upon agreement.
Section 4 Supporting Organizations of the Association

Article 16 (Establishment) Aimed at contributing to the development of the Northeast Asian region, each member regional government may establish a supporting organization (hereinafter referred to as “Supporting Organization of the Association”) to support the activities of the Association. <Newly Enacted on October 21, 1998>

Article 17 (Registration)
1. If a member regional government establishes a Supporting Organization of the Association, it can register the organization by submitting an application. <Newly Enacted on October 21, 1998>
2. The Supporting Organization of the Association shall report its activities to the Association. <Newly Enacted on October 21, 1998>

Chapter 4 Final Provisions

Article 18 (Effect) This present Charter shall take effect as of September 27th, 2016. <Amended on September 27, 2016>

Article 19 (Scope of Membership) The founding members of the Association consist of regional governments, which attended the conference of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in 1996 and agreed to the fundamental spirit of the present Charter. <revised on September 11, 2013>

The representatives of the regional governments who have been given the due authority by each member regional government have hereby signed the present Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in Gyeongju-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, the Republic of Korea, on September 12, 1996.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of October 21, 1998.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of September 11, 2002.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of September 8, 2004.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of October 28, 2010.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of October 22, 2014.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect as of September 27, 2016.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from October 29, 2018.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from September 21, 2022.

Regulations on the Establishment and Operation of NEAR Subcommittees

Established on October 21, 1998
Amended on September 4, 2007
Amended on September 2, 2008
Amended on October 29, 2010
Amended on July 19, 2011
Amended on September 11, 2013
Amended on September 26, 2017
Amended on October 29, 2018

The present regulations stipulate rules regarding the establishment and operation of subcommittees in accordance with Clause 4 of Article 10 of the Charter of NEAR. <revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 1 (Establishment) For smooth operation of individual projects or tasks (hereinafter referred to as “Individual Projects”) proposed at the General Assembly or the Working Committee of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments, subcommittees shall be established for each field of work. <revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 2 (Name and Working Area) The names of the subcommittees shall be as follows:
1. Subcommittee on Economy and Humanities Exchange <revised on September 11, 2013>
2. Subcommittee on Environment
3. Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange <integrated on September 2, 2008>
4. Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention
5. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
6. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
7. Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries <newly established on September 2, 2008>
8. Subcommittee on Tourism <newly established on September 2, 2008>
10. Subcommittee on Energy and Climate Change <newly established on October 28, 2010>
11. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
13. Subcommittee on Agriculture <newly established on July 19, 2011>
14. Subcommittee on Sports <newly established on September 11, 2013>
15. Subcommittee on Logistics and Transportation <newly established on September 26, 2017>
16. Subcommittee on International Exchange of Human Resources <newly established on September 26, 2017>
17. Subcommittee on E-Commerce <newly established on September 26, 2017>
18. Subcommittee on Innovation Plus <newly established on October 29, 2018>
19. Subcommittee on Youth Policy <newly established on October 29, 2018>
20. Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine <newly established on October 29, 2018>

Article 3 (Functions)
1. Each subcommittee shall review and discuss methods to coordinate opinions among regional governments and realize project plans to promote effective execution of “Individual Projects” led by
Article 4 (Structure) Each subcommittee consists of directors of local government divisions who have an interest in the field that each subcommittee is responsible for.

Article 5 (Operation)
1. An elected member regional government (hereinafter referred to as “Coordinator”) shall be in charge of liaison, coordination, and operation of each subcommittee. <revised on September 26, 2017>
2. The office term of a Coordinator is two years, and it can be reelected. Upon request, a subcommittee can be operated jointly with a joint coordinating government. <revised on July 19, 2011, September 26, 2017>
3. In principal, liaison, and coordination for the operation of a subcommittee shall be based on telecommunications such as postal mail, fax, and e-mail.
4. The Coordinators of each subcommittee shall host a subcommittee meeting or participate in NEAR-related activities at least once during its term. <revised on July 19, 2011, September 26, 2017>
5. The Coordinator should endeavor to attract many participants from NEAR-member regional governments to participate in the subcommittee meeting. <newly enacted on July 19, 2011, revised September 26, 2017>
6. If necessary, the Working Committee can conduct evaluations on the subcommittee’s operation. <newly enacted on July 19, 2011>
7. The NEAR Secretariat may propose a replacement of Coordinators to the Working Committee if the Coordinator has not run subcommittee meetings for more than two years and another regional government wishes to take over the role of Coordinator. <newly enacted on October 29, 2018>
8. The replacement of the Coordinator will be decided at the Working Committee where the majority of the members are present and the members with the right to vote cast a majority (more than half) yes vote. <newly enacted on October 29, 2018>

Article 6 (Participation)
1. All member regions are eligible to participate in a subcommittee. <revised on July 19, 2011>
2. For efficient operation and practical outcomes of each subcommittee, the Coordinator may invite specialists, experts, or businesspersons from NEAR-member regional governments. <newly enacted on September 26, 2017>

Article 7 (Expenses) Expenses for the operation of each subcommittee shall be borne by the “Coordinator.” In the event of a subcommittee meeting being convened, expenses for transportation and accommodation shall be covered by participating regional governments, in principle.

Article 8 (Relation to the Secretariat) Each “Coordinator” shall send information organized and updated at the subcommittee to the Secretariat, which shall distribute the documentation to the rest of the regional governments. <revised on July 19, 2011, revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 9 (Revision of Regulations) Revision of the present regulations shall be decided by the Working Committee.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on October 21, 1998.
Regulations on the Membership Fees

Enacted on September 28, 2016
Amended on September 26, 2017
Amended on August 7, 2019

Article 1 (Purpose)
This regulation seeks to prescribe matters related to the management and operation of the membership fee and its usage.

Article 2 (Principles of Accounting)
Accounting shall be conducted according to the principles below:
1. The Secretary-General shall maintain transparency and reliability of the accounting process by submitting objective and evidential documents.
2. The Secretary-General shall disclose information on the operation of the membership fee when requested by members.
3. The Secretary-General shall manage the membership fee effectively.

Article 3 (Fiscal Year)
The fiscal year of the Association shall be from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

Article 4 (Responsibilities in Accounting)
The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the management of the membership fee, and any related processes.

Article 5 (Membership Fees)
The membership fee shall be applied in accordance with the following clauses:
1. Each member shall pay an annual fee of USD 1,000.
2. The currency that shall be used for paying the membership fee is the currency of the country where the Secretariat is located, and the fee shall be paid by April 30 of each fiscal year. NEAR members who are new to the Association shall pay the fee starting in the year following the approval of its membership.
3. The Secretary-General may make necessary expenditures after receiving the Chairperson’s approval in case of extraordinary disbursements. In such cases, the Secretary-General shall need to report and get approval at the General Assembly or the Working Committee.

Article 6 (Regulation of Member Rights)
When a member fails to pay the membership fee for two fiscal years, the rights to vote and run for election provided in Article 7 and the right to vote in Clause 1, Article 9 may be restricted by the Secretariat. However, the member regional government with restricted rights may recover its right as a member in the fiscal year when the membership fee is paid.

Article 7 (Usage of Membership Fee)
The membership fee shall be used for the development and projects of NEAR to meet the common goals of the members. The Secretariat shall gather the opinions of members when selecting projects that require funding.

Article 8 (Installation, Composition, and Operation of the Deliberation Committee)
The Deliberation Committee shall be installed, formed, and operated in accordance with the following clauses:
1. The Deliberation Committee constitutes of people at the director general or director level of each member country that have dispatched public officers to the Secretariat. However, in the case of the Republic of Korea, the Committee member will be elected from regions other than Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and the member regions including auditors will be excluded.
2. The term of each committee member shall be within the period of secondment of dispatched officers from each member country.
3. The Deliberation Committee shall have a chairperson and he/she will be elected by mutual vote.
4. To facilitate the smooth operation of the Deliberation Committee, the committee shall be operated by a suitable person who is in charge of the Secretariat.
5. The Chairman of the committee shall hold a meeting more than once a year. However, if there is a difficulty in convening the committee meeting, it can be resolved in writing.
6. A meeting of the Deliberation Committee shall be formed by more than half of the committee members present and resolved by the votes of more than half the members.

Article 9 (General Budget Planning)
The Secretary-General shall draw up and submit a budget plan and business plan (hereinafter referred to as “General Budget Planning”) for the following year to the board of directors of the committee for approval by June 30.

Article 10 (Deliberation on General Budget Plan)
1. In case of a budget plan submitted by the Secretary-General, the Deliberation Committee shall review it and submit it as a bill for approval to the General Assembly or the Working Committee which will be held in the year.
2. Financial plans shall be approved by the decision of the General Assembly or Working Committee. The deliberation in Clause 1 shall be carried out at least one month before the General Assembly or Working Committee is held.

Article 11 (Execution of Budget and Project Plans)
1. The Secretary-General shall execute budget and project plans approved at the General Assembly or the Working Committee.
2. The Secretary-General may make necessary expenditures after receiving the Chairperson’s approval in case of extraordinary disbursements. In such cases, the Secretary-General shall need to report and get approval at the General Assembly or the Working Committee held for the current year.

Article 12 (Examination of Accounts)
1. The Secretary-General shall prepare a periodical financial report for every fiscal year and submit it to auditors by May 31.
2. Auditors shall submit the audit reports and comments to the Secretariat at least a month before the General Assembly or the Working Committee which will be held in the year.

Article 13 (Appointment and Term of Auditors)
The appointment and term of auditors shall be executed in accordance with Article 7 (Executives) and Article 8 (Functions) of the Charter.

ADDENDUM
The Regulations shall enter into force on January 1, 2017. (However, the payment period of the annual membership fee will be delayed for the time being.) <Revised on September 26, 2017>, <Revised on August 7, 2019>
Member Regional Governments

Russia
- Republic of Buryatia
- Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)
- Republic of Tuva
- Altai Region
- Zabaykalsky Territory
- Khakassia Republic
- Krasnoyarsk Territory
- Khabarovsk Territory
- Amur Region
- Kural Region
- Komsomolsk Region
- Magadan Region
- Sakhalin Region
- Ussuriysky Region
- Khabarovsk Region
- Koryakia Region
- Russia

Mongolia
- UB Ulaanbaatar City
- Arkhangai Aimag
- Bayan-Ulgii Aimag
- Bayan-Ovoo Aimag
- Bulgan Aimag
- Govi-Altai Aimag
- Govisumber Aimag
- Govi-Altai Uul Aimag
- Dornogovi Aimag
- Dornogovi Aimag
- Dundgovi Aimag
- Zavkhan Aimag
- Ovorkhangai Aimag
- Umnugovi Aimag
- Sukhbaatar Aimag
- Selenge Aimag
- Tuv Aimag
-Uvs Aimag
- Khovd Aimag
- Khentii Aimag
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<td>Assembly of European Regions (AER)</td>
<td>The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.aer.eu">www.aer.eu</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.icel.org">www.icel.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Founded in 1985 to pursue cooperation and subsidiarity, AER brings together nearly 134 regional governments from 27 countries, and is located in Strasbourg, Alsace, France.</td>
<td>The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) is a global network of more than 1000 cities from 86 countries around the world, committed to building a sustainable future. In order to achieve sustainable development goals in the international community, it works to support the role of regional government and local action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regions of Climate Action (R20)
Founded by global leaders in cooperation with the United Nations, R20 aims to help the regional governments develop projects, policies, and best practices for low carbon, green growth, economic development and implementation in order to cope with climate change. | regions20.org |